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April 2, 2019

The Honorable Chad Mayes
California State Assembly
State Capitol, Room 4098
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 854 – Continued Strong Opposition

Dear Assembly Member Mayes:

I have read your April 1 letter thanking IID for hosting a private meeting with you and others at its La Quinta facility to discuss your bill, AB 854, and asking the district to hold a similar event in the Imperial Valley.

If your letter was meant as a serious effort to broker a solution or find an alternative to your bad bill, you missed the mark or weren't really aiming for it. I was unable to attend the March 22 meeting, but, according to the IID officials who were there, your letter misstates the tenor of the discussion and IID's position.

I respectfully but firmly find your statement of "IID's support for voting rights of electrical ratepayers in the Coachella Valley" to be materially false. IID does not recognize voting rights – current or prospective – for electrical ratepayers who reside in the Coachella Valley, beyond those they already possess as members of the Coachella Valley Water District (CVWD).

Nor could IID do so without violating its Imperial Valley electorate's (1) First Amendment right to not associate with those who rely on the Coachella Canal in the Coachella Valley Water District, and (2) Fourteenth Amendment right to have a proportionally weighted vote on Colorado River water matters. Indeed, granting CVWD electors the right to elect directors on IID would *double* their voting power while diluting that of *every other elector* to an agency drawing water from the Colorado River.

Finally, you must surely be aware that your statement of IID's water rights being "sacrosanct" do not at all line up with AB 854's attempt to shoehorn six additional directors from Riverside County onto IID's water rights-holding Board of Directors.

For these reasons and others, IID can see no value in further private meetings or, for that matter, future talks with you. However, the District would be glad to offer you a public workshop in the IID boardroom, so that you and other politicians from Riverside County can explain how your ill-conceived bill protects the Imperial Valley's historic water rights,

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respects its electors' legal voting rights and preserves the same low energy rates that IID ratepayers enjoy in the Imperial and Coachella valleys.

You should know that IID continues to be strongly opposed to AB 854, with or without your new amendments, and its duly elected board is unmoved by political stunts dressed up as peace offerings. It appears the only way for IID to deal with your reckless bill is to defeat it, which I can assure you will now become its focus.

Sincerely,



Erik Ortega
Board President

cc: Assembly Member Cecilia M. Aguiar-Curry, A.D. 4
Assembly Member Eduardo Garcia, A.D. 56
Senator Ben Hueso, S.D. 40
Senator Jeff Stone, S.D. 28
Norma Sierra Galindo, IID Board Vice President
James C. Hanks, IID Director
Bruce Kuhn, IID Director
Alex Cardenas, IID Director
Frank A. Oswalt, IID General Counsel